

Homestay Guidelines and Student Contract

Congratulations on having made the decision to study in the US. We here at Global Study Connections want to support you in your studies as well as your life here in the US. Choosing to live with a host family is one of the most important decisions you make, affecting your development for years to come. Please understand that being a part of a host family is different from attending a boarding school. You are a part of our family, which means we all work together to make the relationship work. Please be kind and respectful to us, and we will do the same in return. We are here to interact with you. For example, show us your pictures you brought with you. Tell us about your holidays and how you celebrate them. We invited you into our home because we are interested in getting to know you and your culture and have you learn about ours. If you are not interested in this kind of a relationship, a boarding school might be a more appropriate place for you.

In a host home you will be dealing with different cultural values, language barriers, and social issues. Please don't exclude yourself from your host family by spending all of your time in your room. You came here to be a part of a host family, and they want to spend time with you.

What we hope is to make this a valuable experience for you, both in terms of education and personal satisfaction. In order to assure that you have a safe, rewarding and educational experience, our organization has established the following guidelines. It is essential that you read and understand them. Your host parents have also been given a Host Family Handbook which you may request to review it or find it online under Resources at:

www.globalstudyconnections.com

1. **Insurance:** All students are required to have proof of medical insurance at all times. It is also recommended that students purchase accident and property insurance. Host family insurance does not cover students.
2. **Host Family:** Please remember that each host family is different. Student understands that families are diverse with different cultural backgrounds. Some families are families with or without children, single parents, single adults, and retired people. Host may host more than one International student. They are very excited to host International students. As it is very difficult finding host families, please be thankful to them for sharing their home with you.
3. **House Rules:** Please follow the rules of your host family. Each family will have their own rules and lifestyle. Many families will have the rules written for you. Your host family has kindly allowed you to become a part of their family, for which they deserve your appreciation and respect. What your host family requires of you may be different from what your friends' host families require of them. As a general rule, speak only English while you are with your host family, even if others from your country are with you. To speak in your native language in front of your host family is considered rude.

4. **Household Duties:** Living with a host family means that you are a part of the family. It is your responsibility to share household chores with your family. Please remember to clean up after yourself (washing dishes, turning off electrical appliances) You must keep your room and shared bathroom clean and organized at all times, which includes making your own bed and washing your own clothes.
5. **Meals and Food:** Your family will provide you with three basic meals each day. If you have special requirements, prefer certain types of food on a daily basis or large meals you will need to purchase them yourself. Most families have working parents who leave early. As a result, students are expected to prepare their own breakfast and lunch. Breakfast is generally only cereal, toast and tea/coffee. Lunch is generally a sandwich. You may prepare lunch to bring to school. Generally dinner is a sit-down meal with the family and you are expected to join the family for dinner. If you cannot join the family for dinner on a particular night, please let your family know ahead of time, but this should be rare occasions. Please note that meals at your host family's home are different from what you are accustomed to in your own family. Non essential groceries (eg. snacks, soda, juice, your country food) are not included in what the host family is expected to provide. Please do not eat in your bedroom; only eat in the kitchen. Food in your room can attract bugs and mice. If you receive food in the mail, please store it and eat it in the kitchen.
6. **Energy Conservation:** Most families are very conservative and care about the environment. Please be conservative by turning off lights when you leave a room, taking short showers or baths. If you are cold please wear extra sweaters and ask your family for extra blankets. In the US, most families keep their thermostats set between 64-68 degrees (18-20 C). The washing machine and dryer are very big and draw lots of energy so most families do laundry once a week. Please schedule when you do laundry around the family schedule. Your host mother or father will show you how to do laundry the first time.
7. **Relatives/Guests:** Please do not have relatives or guest stay at your host family's house during your first three months. After three months, you must obtain permission from your host family and GSC prior to inviting anyone to stay at your host family's home. Your guest may be charged an additional fee, paid to the host family if the stay is longer than a weekend stay.
8. **Personal Belongings:** Students are responsible for their own personal belongings whether at home or at school. **Global Study Connections will not be responsible for your personal belongings.** Remember not to carry a lot of cash with you, and always keep your valuable belongings secure and locked. Students are encouraged to have property insurance. Host Family insurance does not cover student's property in case of loss or damage.
9. **Money:** You should not lend money to or borrow money from your host family or anyone else. If you need money, contact GSC so we may be able to contact your family and/or agency.
10. **Communication:** It is important to communicate with your host family. If you do not understand your host family, it is nice to tell them that you do not understand. Please communicate in writing if something is important. If you will be late coming home,

please remember to let your host family know ahead of time or please call them so that they do not worry. If you are ever in doubt about anything, please give GSC a call.

11. **Telephone:** Ask your host family about telephone rules since each family has different rules. Please do not make long distance phone calls from your host family's phone. Instead, we advise you to use a calling card or purchase a cellular phone. **Please do not make or have people call you late at night.** Please do not ask your host family to sign any contracts for your cellular phone.
12. **Internet Connection:** Internet connection is not guaranteed. Some families may charge an extra fee. Please install anti-virus software for all your computers. You can download <http://windows.microsoft.com/mse> for free. Students will be held responsible in the event that you use the internet inappropriately. Most internets in host homes are turned off at 11:00 P.M. based on GSC guidelines. If you need to use your internet past 11:00 PM you must ask permission. Internet is turned back on at 7:00 A.M. Please schedule your study times around these times. Your internet privileges may also be further restricted in your grades fall below a "C" this will be determined by your host parents in consultation with the school and GSC.
13. **Damages:** Students are responsible for any damage to their host families' house that they cause. Please ask your host family about changing anything in your room (moving furniture, placing things on the wall and so on.)
14. **Travel:** Students are not permitted to travel out of state without the written permission of their parents in their home country to GSC. This permission must be received by GSC 3 weeks in advance of planned trip. Student must provide host family all travel plans 3 weeks in advance including but not limited to: dates, flight numbers, hotel or address they will stay upon arrival, name and phone number of adults they will stay with during their travels. Student may travel in state or to stay with friends for a weekend in state as long as Host Parents are given 1 week notice and the Host Parent grants their permission.
15. **Transportation:** Please do not ask your host family to drive you around too often. Students must be able to take the public bus to school and other places. Please do not ask your host family to be taxi a driver for you.
16. **Driving:** For students under 18 years old GSC does not permit students to drive. Students under 18 may get a driver's permit and take driver education classes. If a student who is 18 years of age or older would like to drive they need written permission from their parents, pass a driving class, obtain a state driver's license and purchase their car insurance, prior to driving. Host parents cannot give you driving lessons; this must be contracted by you through a private driving school. Host parent cannot put you on your insurance you must have your own American car insurance and show proof of insurance.
17. **After School Activities:** If you want to do something after school, please ask two days before the event. (We know sports practices are an exception to the rule; however you will be given a schedule of practice times, so there should never be conflict.) If you don't ask, and the Host Family doesn't know in advance, you may not be able to go. Also, when you do ASK, the Host Family will need to know four things: how are you getting there? Who are you with? How are you getting home? And what time will you be home? Please understand that these details are necessary to ensure your safety.

18. **Monthly Stipend** A monthly stipend is paid to your host family by GSC to reimburse them for food, lodging, heat, water and other utilities. Their stipend is not a salary to take care of you; rather they take care of you on a volunteer basis. Your host family stipend is paid by your parents or agent directly to GSC in August and GSC distributes your monthly stipend to your host family on the 30th of each month. GSC holds your stipend in a special trust account in the case you change host family mid-year. Homestay stipend is for room and board only. Other expenses such as bus fare, transportation, movie and personal items, including special snacks or eating out are to be paid by you.
19. **Stipend Refunds:** If the student and/or host family have a disagreement and student decides to or is asked to move out suddenly, Global Study Connections will not be responsible for any refund. Please be aware some families do not refund the unused portion of a monthly stipend.
20. **Housing Commitment:**
Students are expected to stay with their host family for one school year (Sept-June). Host families look forward to hosting students. You must give your host family a three week (21days) written notice prior to moving out. If you do not give notice, you will be required to pay the full one-month homestay fee. For notices less than 21 days, you will be required to pay for one-month homestay fee. Please call GSC immediately when you decide to move out (207-564-8098). Host homes are GSC host homes and are for students who are with GSC only.
21. **Problems:** If you have a problem with your host family, please call Global Study Connections immediately. GSC is here to help you. 207-564-8098 or call your area coordinator.
22. **Removal from Host Family:** The host family and GSC reserves the right to remove a student at any time for violating house rules, student engaging in any illegal activity, rude and impolite behavior and language. Student will not receive any refund for any fees paid. If the student and/or host family have a disagreement and the student decides to or is asked to move out suddenly there is no guarantee of any refund.
23. **Avoid Illegal Activities:** You are required to follow local, state and federal laws while living in the United States. You may lose your student visa status (F-1, J-1) depending on the degree of your illegal activities. You must never drink alcohol or drive without a driver's license. Please note it is illegal for people under the age of 18 to smoke or use tobacco, and people under the age of 21 cannot drink alcohol.
24. **Warranties:** I warrant that all the information provided is true and correct, I am not a sex offender, and I have not been convicted of any crime in the US or my home country.
25. **Hold Harmless and Indemnification:** GSC will be held harmless from and against all claims, damages, actions, liability, and expense concerning loss of life, or personal property arising from a student participating in our housing programs. I understand that the hosts are not employees or agents and that GSC has no control of host's behavior. I assume all the risks associated with injury or loss arising from my host families' behavior. I release GSC of any liability and claims against my host families' behavior.



GLOBAL STUDY CONNECTIONS

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Keep in mind that you are visiting the U.S. as a citizen/diplomat of your country and that you are expected to behave accordingly. This means that you are representing the people of your country as being courteous, considerate, and open-minded. Please respect the ways, traditions and culture of your American Hosts and remember that you are making an impression that will last long after you leave the U.S. It is our goal to ensure that you have a successful time while in the U.S. Our goal is for you and your host family to have a lasting friendship and be understanding of each other for many years. We are here to help you. Do not hesitate to call us at any time if you have any difficulties.

High School Student:

I have read, understand, and agree to follow the above listed rules and guidelines.

Student's Name (Printed) _____

Signature _____ Date _____

International Parent

Parent's Name (Printed) _____

Signature _____ Date _____

Host Parent:

We, Host Parents of _____ have read, understand, and agree to follow the above listed guidelines as well as the guidelines listed in the Host Family Handbook and our Agreement with GSC.

Host Parent's Name: _____

Signature _____ Date _____